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WAYS
OF
OVERCOMING TEMPTATION,
WITH A FORM OF
SELF EXAMINATION,
AND
Prayers.

BY THE
REV. R. GEORGE BOODLE, M.A.
Vicar of Compton Dando, Somerset.

“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life,
whereunto thou art also called.” 2 Tim. vi. 12.

LONDON: JAMES BURNS. BATH: W. POCOCK.
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“ My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Ephes. x. 10, 11.

“ We receive this Child into the Congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign him with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end.—Amen.”

Office for Publick Baptism of Infants.

THE following is a humble offering to Christ's children for His sake. It has been sent out in the hope that it may, under His blessing, help them in some little way to live more closely to Him; and guide them in their battle against the enemies of their souls. It was not therefore written, nor does it seem fit, for those who have turned wilfully back after the world, the flesh, or the Devil. They need to be warned of their danger, before they will attend to any rules for overcoming temptation. Those for whom it is intended are:—

1st. Young persons, before or after Confirmation; among whom, even in the most hopeful cases, there is necessarily much ignorance both of the many snares of the devil, and the best means of escaping them. They ought clearly to understand, that *they must expect to be tempted*, but that they must *war against, and overcome* the very beginnings of temptation.—2nd. Those who have fallen into any great sin, or have been living in careless and evil habits, from which they have been newly awakened. It is of the greatest consequence that these should be set to the work of taking up the cross, and following Jesus: and that they should be prepared to press toward heaven through the many hard struggles, which await them; lest they fall back, and their “last state be worse than the first.”—

3rd. It is intended for those who have for some time been leading a regular life, but have not yet set with sufficient earnestness to the work of *daily* watchfulness, careful self-amendment, and growth in the life of Christ.

Such brethren must be reminded that this is a state of *warfare, not of rest*. And if they would ever enter into the rest of Christ hereafter, they *must walk in His steps of self-denial here*: and must go on *utterly to abolish the whole body of sin*.

One great object of these pages is to endeavour to bring Churchmen to aim at greater holiness, *because* they have been called into Christ's holy Church.—It is to them that the words are addressed, “Ye are the salt of the earth.” They have blessings and means of attaining to a likeness to Christ, *such as no other bodies of men possess*. And the awakening and blessing of others depends much on the advances which Churchmen make in brotherly love, and holiness. It is not by complaining of Dissenters, that such as are Dissenters from education or an ill directed zeal will be brought out of their danger to the truth. But by Churchmen themselves humbly valuing the truth, and by showing forth, in a life of meekness, unworldliness, self denial, and brotherly love, that *there is a Presence among them, which others have not got*. And that it is a blessing to have fellowship with the Apostolic Church, because her “fellowship is with the Father, and with Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The writer has only to request that if any of his brethren derive any benefit from these pages, they would remember him in their prayers, that God would have mercy on him.

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON
EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARDS MEN.

Christmas, 1845.



WAYS OF OVERCOMING TEMPTATION.

1. **FIRMLY** believe your own exceeding weakness, and readiness to sin, without the help of the Holy Spirit. But do not dare to make this an excuse for sinning; for His help is ever ready for you; and you "can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth" you.

He is not far off; for He has declared, that He is with His Church always, even unto the end of the world. And as He was ready to stretch out His hand to St. Peter, when he was on the rough water, and feared to sink, so the Comforter is ready, in His name, to save those from falling, who desire His help.

But how are you to draw near Him, to find this help of your God? There are two principal ways:—the Holy Communion, and diligent prayer. Use these with humble faith; and then, although you are weak in yourself, you will be made strong in Him.

Draw near to the Holy Communion whenever it is offered to you. Be not afraid of coming too often; for God invites you by His own minister; and will not send you empty away, if you come hungering and thirsting after righteousness. But, remember, the oftener you come, *the more closely you must search into your life; and take more pains to root out the evil from your heart.* For the more abundantly a piece of land has the rain from heaven, and the warmth of the sun, so much the more fruit will be required of it: and if it bring not forth fruit, it "*is nigh unto cursing.*" The Holy

Communion is not a means of making up for a careless life ; but of helping to a holy one. It is the chief means in Christ's kingdom on earth, by which His people are strengthened beforehand against coming temptations. So that we may say, " my flesh and my heart faileth, but *God is the strength of my heart*, and my portion for ever."

Again, *sincere and constant prayer* is a sure way of overcoming ; if you " ask in faith, nothing wavering"—*i. e.*, really wishing to be set free, cost whatever it may ; not half hankering after the sin.

Pray, in your regular prayers, morning, and evening, for help against your besetting temptations ; or for strength in any difficulty, which you foresee.

Particularly look for help in the *prayers offered in Church* ; for, when we are gathered together in Christ's name, He is more especially in the midst of us. " The blind and the lame came to Him in the Temple, and He healed them." Matt. xxi. 14.

If you have *the privilege of daily service* in the Church, and come in humble faith, you will find it " a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." Isai. xxv. 4.

But besides these regular means of drawing near to God, never allow yourself to be long without lifting up your heart to Him. *Frequent secret prayer* keeps the soul very near to God : and under the shadow of His wing you are safe. In company, or at meal times, or in your daily occupation, or whatever you may be doing, you may lift up your heart silently to God, and pray Him to defend you. But, if at any time a temptation is more troublesome than usual, and cannot be overcome by this means, go away, and kneel down, and very devoutly pray to God to save you from all evil ; and, especially, from the evil, which is now assaulting you. Lay your heart open before Him, in all lowly trustfulness ; not hiding any corner of it from your own eyes (you cannot from His.) Open it before that Eye, which is brighter than the

sun, and beg of Him to take out of you whatever offends Him. Give your heart so entirely into His hands, as to be ready to part with worldly prospects, comforts, money, the good opinion of others, your dearest friends, or some too-dearly loved object ; in fact, be ready to part with any thing in the world ; and be content to go mourning, if God require it, for the rest of your short life, sooner than lose the love of your heavenly Father.

2. Remember that God sees you wherever you are. And "live thou in the fear of the Lord all day long."

3. Turn to the Bible as a refuge from unquiet thoughts. Only remember to read it attentively and humbly. Do not let your mind wander ; and then it will be filled with good, which will drive out the evil.

When you are reading, remember that God is speaking to you. As to the way of reading ; you had better read a little, and then *think of its meaning* : and if your Bible has references at the side, turn to them, and compare other parts of Holy Scripture with that which you are reading.

4. When you are tempted, meet the tempter with words of Scripture : for this is to use "the sword of the Spirit." And Jesus gave us the example of doing this, when He answered all Satan's temptations by "it is written."

5. Few things can be recommended to Christians of greater service, than to get the habit of using the Psalms as a book of devotion. They are so full of the breathings of the devout soul under all kinds of circumstances, that whenever the feelings are stirred by joy or sorrow, hope or fear, those who have the Psalms at their hearts, will find them rise to their lips. Do not read them only for *instruction* ; they are lofty *devotion*, inspired by the Spirit of God : and we must try to raise up our hearts to them.

6. Never recall and dwell upon the thought of those persons or things, which have tempted you, except for the purposes of self examination, penitence,

and watchfulness against like temptations. Nor ever think upon the circumstances of sins, which you may have seen or heard of in others.

If the thought comes; force it away, by attending to what you are about more actively: or by some serious reflection; as seriously remembering that you will stand before Jesus Christ one day, and will have to give account for what you are thinking.

Or remember, that the Holy Spirit has been given you to dwell in your heart: and that to know Him is more blessed than any thing; but that evil hides Him from our souls, and if we are separated from Him, we are separated *from our very life*.

7. If a temptation comes upon you, when alone, and the mind is very unsettled; it is sometimes good to seek the society of others for a while; but this is not often necessary.

8. It is a great help frequently to remember your **Baptismal vow**. Think what sort of life it binds you to lead. You have renounced once and for ever the service of sin, even in the least degree; and have promised to believe in God according to the faith of the Church, and to be the faithful servant of God to your life's end. Remember, that in Confirmation you solemnly renewed these vows, with your own lips: and, whenever you have received the Holy Communion, you have professed, "here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee;" and since you are bound by these vows, and are not your own, but Christ's, *what have you to do with listening to temptation?* No more than soldiers have to do with the invitations of the enemies of their king to desert his service. *God will require your vows of you in the day of Judgment.* "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay." Eccles. v. 5.

9. Meditate often upon the wonderful blessings which have been given you in the two blessed sacraments.

10. Try to *ûx* your thoughts upon what it is to have been made a member of Christ's holy Church, i. e., to have been made *sheep in Christ's fold ; a †branch in the true vine ; a ‡limb joined with other limbs in one sacred Body, of which Christ is the Head ; a || living stone, dead before, but made living by the Holy Ghost, and builded together with tens of thousands of living stones into one glorious spiritual Temple, of which Christ is the Chief Corner Stone, in which God dwells.

(* John x. 16 ; Isai. xl. 11 ; Ps. xxiii.—† St. John xv.—‡ Rom. xii. 4, 5 ; 1 Cor. x. 17, and xii. 12 to 28 ; Ephes. iv. 15 and 16 ; Coloss. i. 18 and 24 ; see also chap. ii. and iii.—|| 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, and vi. 19 ; 2 Cor. vi. 16 ; Ephes. ii. 20 to 22 ; 1 Pet. ii. 4 and 5.—See also Heb. xii. 22, 23 ; Gal. iv. 26 ; Isai. ii. 2, 3.)

Resolve to do and *suffer any thing rather than forfeit these blessings*, by giving way to sin. But be not content with just keeping out of sin, and just keeping in grace. If you would be safe, desire to have and know the blessings of Christ's Church more fully. There are *deep* blessings in the Church, if you will seek for them ; and the more deeply you seek, the more you will find.

Set before you, as your object, to *improve* in all things, and to find God's help present with you. And look for this help not in mere feelings of joy, or assurance ; for men have often fallen presently from these, to sins of anger, unkindness, evil-speaking, nay, lust. But do you look for Christ's presence, in becoming more conformed to His pattern, in heart and daily life ; in having deeper hatred of sin, greater tenderness of conscience, greater love of the brethren, and compassion to the poor ; greater readiness to forgive injuries ; and, to speak generally, in greater steadiness of aim in leading *the* Christian life. Thus you will be admitted into the inner blessings of the Church : and so will both be really strengthened more by the Holy Spirit ; and, when tempted by Satan's painted deceits, will be helped to see that you have something, which you would not change for all the world. In pro-

portion as you realise this, you will "never thirst" after riches, honours, pleasures; for you will have "a well of water springing up in you:" and, being satisfied, will say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

11. Think also of the hopes, which have been given you of heaven, if you overcome. And if God's blessings in this world are good, what must those be which are laid up in heaven, for them that fight the good fight unto the end? See Revel. xxi. 7. Think of the crown, and do not murmur at the cross.

12. But if you are apt to faint, refresh yourself with looking to the cross of Christ. Remember you are a follower of a crucified Saviour, who willingly became for us "a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Meditate often upon His shame, and sacred sufferings. (Heb. xii. 2, 3, &c.) Follow Him from the room of the last supper to the garden of Gethsemane; to the house of Annas; of Caiphas: trace the meek footsteps of your God to the hall of Pilate; to the presence of Herod; back to Pilate again: listen to the scourging and stripes, by which you were healed: see Him walking along the way of sorrows, bearing His cross, till He sunk exhausted under it: yet, in that extreme weakness, how strong in patience, in obedience to His Father's will, in love unspeakable! Amidst all this, hear Him taking care only for others. "Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." Behold Him, at length, at Calvary, stretched on the cross, nailed to it, hung up in the eyes of all, to die as a malefactor, between two thieves: yet see still His enduring patience, and overflowing love: hear Him commend His virgin mother to the care of His beloved disciple, to soothe her declining years: hear Him promise Paradise to the penitent thief by His side: and, since even this is not enough for His boundless love, hear Him pray for His very murderers; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do:" and then, when all His suffering and conflict were "finished," behold Him bow His head meekly, and give up the ghost.

But dare not to look idly upon this most sacred, most awful sight ; nor go back to the world, as if you had not seen it. But gird yourself to "take up your cross, and follow" Jesus. Gird yourself to stand more firm in patience, meekness, purity, love, forgivingness, obedience ; guard against ways of self-pleasing ; and be not content till you have determined upon secretly doing something, which may be a self-denial to you ; that so you may remember, that eternal suffering is the reward of sin ; and, in some little way, mortify your sinful nature ; and try to copy in yourself the suffering of Him, who died for you. The Church says in the exhortation, in the visitation of the sick, "There should be *no greater comfort* to Christian persons than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses. For He Himself went not up to joy, but first He suffered pain ; He entered not into His glory before He was crucified. So, truly, our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ ; and our door to enter into eternal life, *is gladly to die with Christ that we may rise again from death, and dwell with Him in everlasting life.*" See Coloss. iii. The oftener you deny your own wishes, and feelings, and impulses, for Christ's sake, the more you will advance in the life of Christ ; and the greater strength you will find. On the other hand, *you never can advance without denying yourself.*

13. When you have overcome, or been set free from, one kind of temptation, take heed that you do not give way to another.

The temptations which most beset youth are lessened or removed by advancing years ; but then you are tempted in other ways. Be sure your temptations to disobey God, and to live to the world, will not cease, as long as you live : therefore determine to hold your weapons, and watch, and fight till death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. ii. 10.

14. Cheer up your spirits by reflecting that the trial will not be long, though it may seem so ; but the reward and joy will be eternal. "Our light affliction,

which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. iv. 17.

15. Do not relax your watchfulness merely because what you are about is good. You need as much care to do well what you have rightly chosen, as to make a good choice at first. For instance, going to Church, almsgiving, fasting, doing the duties of our calling, are in themselves good actions, but we have need to watch that our prayers be sincere, that our almsgiving and fasting be done humbly, to God. And that we do our worldly business, *without setting our affections upon worldly success*. Again, going among the sick, and seeing misery, is very good in itself. "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting." Yet those who are the most in the habit of being among their suffering brethren, need much watchfulness, lest by custom they cease to feel for their sufferings.

16. If you have at any time given way to temptation from carelessness or wilfulness, or even negligence, do not for a moment allow yourself to lie still where you are fallen, or to give up in despair, as if you could not obtain grace to repent truly, and lead a Christian life steadily. But humble yourself at once before your Heavenly Father, and repent only the more seriously; and be the more watchful for the time to come. If you give up you *must* perish, and to this Satan would tempt you; but if you persevere, you have hope.

17. Be constant in self examination; and try to find out your most secret heart-sins. For they may otherwise spring up when you are tempted, and help your overthrow; as Achan's concealed theft caused the whole army of Israel to be overthrown before Ai: nor would the Lord be with them till Achan was sought out, and destroyed. Even prayer will not be heard in such case, till the evil is cast out. When Joshua, not knowing Achan's sin, prayed to the Lord, the Lord said unto him; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned. See Joshua vii. But when you have searched out your secret sins, always remember to *take more particular*

care to overcome them in your life; for that is the end of self examination and prayer.

18. Always avoid idleness, whether of body or mind. It is both a sin in itself; and prevents you advancing to good; and opens your heart for any evil. A field unoccupied will always be filled with weeds.

19. Keep your thoughts from wandering; for thus you will prevent many occasions of pride, vanity, envy, lust, jealousy, anger.

20. Particularly avoid listening to, and still more taking part in, jests connected with texts of Holy Scripture, or Christ's ministers, or any things belonging to Him. Besides the irreverence and positive sin of it, it adds greatly to the number of temptations; and prevents your being able to use with full effect that sacred sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. A ridiculous thought fixed upon the words of Holy Scripture, or any other holy things, though it may be repented of, will often rise up as a scourge in more serious times, and hinder you from fixing your thoughts upon God and His message in Church.

21. Take great care against little relapses, and negligences, and slight omissions of duty. If you do not fight against lesser enemies, God will not be near to help you against greater ones.

22. When temptation is most urgent, and would make you take the plunge at once, to escape from the pain of it, calmly reflect, that to give way this time will only increase your difficulties tenfold. It will make you weaker, and give future temptation greater hold over you: and, besides this, it will grievously anger God; and this may, for what you know, be your decisive trial, even though you may live many years: as Saul's trial was in the 2nd year of his reign, when the Lord sent him against the Amelekites.

Gather yourself up, *hold still, and look to God.* The violence of the storm will have the sooner blown over, because of its present violence. "Think it not strange

concerning the fiery trial" which tries you. Others have been tried in like manner, who are now in glory.

23. It is of great blessing to open your past sins and present dangers to some prudent friend, especially to your minister. The mere fact of humbling yourself to make them known, is a proof that you hate them, and are determined to resist them. Besides this, their advice may be of great help to you in some point, which you had not observed. Ask those to whom you open your heart, to join you in praying God for your deliverance. Christians have not to fight alone against sin,—they belong to the army of Christ; and should *care and pray for, comfort and encourage, one another*. Many well-intentioned brethren lose great blessings, and much comfort, by this want of *brotherly openness and fellow feeling*. Those who have trusted one another, and opened their hearts to such as they knew would feel for and with them, have found great comfort from it, and increased help from above. For David says, "There," *i e.*, where "brethren dwell together in unity," "the Lord promised His blessing, and life for evermore."—Ps. cxxxiii. 4. And Christ has promised: "If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing which they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven."—St. Matth. xviii. 19. And St. James exhorts us, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."—James v. 16. And besides the "benefit of ghostly counsel and advice," you may receive from Christ's ministers, if you "humbly and heartily desire it," "the benefit of absolution." (See the 1st Exhortation in giving notice of the Communion; and the Rubric before the Absolution in the Visitation of the Sick.) Of course, in all such intercourse, Christian brethren must remember not to flatter or seek for flattery.

24. Fasting, joined with prayer and almsgiving, is a great help in many ways. Only it must be remembered, that as by that means we give, as it were, a direct challenge to the evil one, we must then especially

be prepared for his assaults. It has been well said, that fasting brings us more into contact with both parts of the invisible world. It opens a close communication with God; and also brings us into collision with Satan. (Consider the temptation of Christ.) But this latter is no reason for omitting it; but only for using it with greater carefulness. For examples, we have in the Old Testament, Moses, Elijah, the Ninevites, Daniel, &c. In the New, Our Divine Saviour, our Pattern; the widow Anna in the temple; the Apostles, when the Bridegroom was taken away from them; and especially St. Paul "in fastings often;" St. Peter in fasting on the house top; and the Churches before the ordination of Ministers. And for own Church, we have careful directions in the list of Fasts, as we well as Festivals in the book of Common Prayer; which, as good Churchmen, we should follow; believing that the authority set over us *has not chosen these things without reason*; and that *God will bless humble obedience*.

To be sure, fasting, rightly and humbly performed, is not pleasant to mere flesh and blood, but what does this matter? As Christians, we wish not to please ourselves, but to mortify all evil; and here is a means of doing so.

In fasting make *a special purpose to overcome sin*; to humble yourself; and to be filled "with God's grace." For better directions, see what is said under this head in "Taylor's Holy Living," or "Taylor's Golden Grove," the latter of which is on the list of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. It need only be added, by way of caution, that if you have neglected this duty hitherto, you ought to begin by degrees. Sudden and violent changes might hurt the body. Do what you can, remembering that *it is intended that you should find some inconvenience*; the cross is not pleasant; and in time you will be able to do more with safety. You should at once refuse to go to, or give entertainments on Friday, the day of your Lord's crucifixion; for, at least, a fast should not be made into a feast: and spend the time you thus save, not in reading amusing books, but in self examination, trying to see and sorrow for your sins, making

resolutions of amendment, and doing good. Watch carefully against feelings of pride, and judging others. But do not hesitate from fear of being laughed at, or called a hypocrite. Fear God and not man: and be in earnest.

25. Whenever you can, try to find an opportunity of doing good to others, as secretly as you can, for Christ's sake. Never be ashamed of the friendship of those, who are despised: "mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." Your Lord washed his disciples' feet. In particular, never be ashamed of your parents or relations, if they are poor or unlearned: nor think yourself above them, if you are raised to a higher place. Be content to be little thought of; and so you will be kept out of the way of many temptations: and will be strengthened to overcome such as assault you. "For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."—James iv. 6.

26. Avoid reading evil; for pitch will defile, and it is folly to think that you can keep your thoughts pure, if you wilfully take the evil words or evil deeds of others into your mind. If you fall upon any accounts of sin in newspapers, think you see the word poison labelled over them, and pass them over, without looking at them: go on to what is innocent and interesting. Would you stop in the streets to hear men cursing or blaspheming, or speaking unclean words? No; you would try to stop your ears, and hasten by. Act in a like way, if you meet with written evil. God sees you.

27. Never speak lightly of evil, or jest at it; as at drunkenness, when the drunkard does foolish things. Or at cunning, when some one has overreached another in a clever way. Or at a worldly grasping spirit, when some one is fond of seeking his own interest, i. e., is selfish and covetous. Or at gluttony, when one is fond of dainties; i. e., makes his belly his god. Or at vanity, when one is fond of gay dressing, and being admired.

These, and such like, are *destructive sins*. But to jest at them takes away the *thought* of their hatefulness and danger. It is the mark of the ungodly, who "*hath*

no fear of God before his eyes," that he "*doth not abhor anything that is evil.*" Ps. xxxvi. 4. "*Fools make a mock at sin.*" Prov. xiv. 9.

Never use the name of the devil lightly. If you are where you cannot avoid hearing evil, do not assent to it in any way.

Those that have the greatest loathing of sin, will be the most likely to overcome temptation.

"Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight." Joshua x. 25.

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh shall find watching." Luke xii. 37.

BROTHERLY LOVE IN CHRIST,

A HELP AGAINST OUR ENEMIES.

O might we all our lineage prove,
Give and forgive, do good and love,
By soft endearments in kind strife
Lightening the load of daily life!

There is much need; for not as yet
Are we in shelter or repose,
The holy house is still beset
With leaguer of stern foes;
Wild thoughts within, bad men without,
All evil spirits round about,
Are banded in unblest device
To spoil Love's earthly paradise.

Then draw we nearer day by day,
Each to his brethren, all to God;
Let the world take us as she may,
We must not change our road;
Not wondering, though in grief to find
The martyr's foe still keep her mind;
But *fixed to hold Love's banner fast,*
And by submission win at last.

KEBLE'S *Christian Year*.

SELF EXAMINATION.

The necessity of it.

SELF examination is absolutely necessary. Without it you cannot know what is in your heart. And, unless you know that, you will have no deep sense of the evil of sin ; of the many ways in which it tempts you, and your own readiness to follow it ; of your need of a High Priest, and Mediator between you and God ; of the blessedness of the sacrifice of Christ, and the help of the Holy Spirit. Your confessions of sin, your * prayers and praises, will all be hollow : you will come to the Holy Communion without godly fear and desire, and depart without blessing.

And though you may confess yourself in general words a sinner, you will be well satisfied with your life, and say, “ peace, peace, when there is no peace.”

Preparation for it.

Before beginning to examine yourself, put aside every other business.

Think that you are preparing against the day of judgment. You are about to search for all those things, which shall be brought forward then ; that you may repent of them, and be forgiven.

* The neglect of self examination is one reason why persons sometimes fancy that the holy prayers of the Church do not speak their wants clearly enough. They lay the blame upon the prayers, whereas the fault is in themselves.

The prayers and praises of the Church are the natural words of an awakened and loving heart, which has *considered* the blessings it has received from God, and its own wants, and sins, *beforehand* ; and comes to pour them before its God and Saviour. Take pains, then, to examine your life regularly, and live in daily obedience to God's word, and then your heart will go along with the words of the prayers.

Do not try to hide, or excuse, any of them; for you cannot do so at that day. It is better to take unpleasantness now, than to hear the sentence at last,—“Go ye cursed.”

Ways of performing this duty.

There are several ways of performing this duty:—
1st. As to time. It should embrace greater or less periods of your life.

Every night, before you lie down to rest, examine the actions, thoughts, and words of the day; and seriously confess any thing, in which you see you have offended God. For you may not rise again until the day of judgment. And this lesser examination is necessary, to prevent little sins from growing upon you by neglect: for the mind soon becomes accustomed to sins, which are often committed, and then hardly sees them to be sins.

Every Friday, which the Church sets apart for fasting, examine whether you have lived to God during the week. To assist your repentance on Friday, remember that Christ suffered and died for our sin on that day.

Before coming to the Holy Communion, make a more searching self examination, with the double purpose of repenting for sins, which you have committed, before you come to the very presence of Christ: and, seeing what are your diseases and weaknesses, that you may bring them for healing to the Physician of your soul. [Consider carefully the instruction given for this in the last answer of the Church Catechism.]

At the beginning of *Lent*, and as often as possible during it, examine your whole life: condemn yourself again for sins which you have before repented of; and try to obtain a more growing hatred of sin in every shape: as a preparation for looking upon Christ crucified more solemnly on Good Friday; and rejoicing more devoutly in His resurrection at Easter.

At *Advent*, examine your whole life, and especially your present practice; that you may prepare for the coming of Christ to judgment, and for the account which you must then give.

2. As the the manner of examining yourself.

One way is :—Think of the first childish sins you remember committing, and trace their progress. See if you committed them again, and if they led to others, and strengthened, or were punished, repented of, and rooted out : see also if they have not some effect upon you now. You can more easily see and judge of your past self, than your present self : but then use the past as a warning to point out the temptations and sins of the present.

Another way is, to divide your life out into portions : as your childhood, your youth, your full age, your declining years ; and some of these may be again divided by any places you have been at, any punishments that have befallen you, any mercies you have received, any heart-piercing warnings you have heard. Search how you have lived in these different periods, and what account you will have to give for them : whether you have remembered in them, that you were God's creature, and child ; and tried to love Him, and do His will : or whether your childhood has been disobedient and sly ; your youth idle, and mis-spent ; your manhood worldly, or covetous : and have there been any great sins, which stand out before you, by which you have broken your Baptismal vows, and stained yourself, and grieved the Holy Spirit ?

Another way is, to take some form of self examination, and try your life by it.

Another is, to think over some part of Holy Scripture ; as the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, or St. Paul's description of Charity ; 1. Cor. xiii. ; and to see how far your conduct agrees with it.

And, lastly, it is not enough to search what you have done, but *why* you have done it.

When you have examined yourself, humbly confess your sins : [beg God's mercy through Jesus Christ : pray for His grace to amend in the things in which you have sinned.

And then set yourself to amend.

Short Form of Daily Self Examination.

1. Did you lie idly in bed this morning? Do not say that you had no business to call you up: every one who has a soul, has business enough.

2. Did you think of God first, when awake; or forget Him, and give the first fruits of your day to the world?

3. Did you waste time in dressing, or in looking at yourself, and thinking of your appearance?

4. Did you altogether neglect your prayers, or say them hastily, or without attention?

5. Did you then, or at any later time of the day, read part of the Bible seriously?

6. Whom have you seen in the day? Have you behaved towards them, as one who will have to give account to God for all you did, said, and thought?

7. Have you in any thing during the day *denied yourself secretly*, for Christ's sake, as He has commanded? You may do this by choosing plain things at your meals,—commoner articles of dress, instead of more showy ones; giving up your wishes to others; being regular in doing your duties at the proper time; bearing an affront without being angry; visiting the sick, not those only who are cheerful and interesting, but those whose rooms are close and unpleasant, and themselves wretched and ignorant.

8. Have you wasted the time which God has lent you? You may have been busy all day long, and yet have sinfully wasted your time, if you have spent it upon some fancy, and neglected your proper calling.

Besides this daily form, you may occasionally add these:—

9. Have you determined to obey God with all your heart, and to resist sin; cost what it may?

10. If you have not fallen down before any graven image, or worshipped any angel or saint; yet have you put your trust in money, or friends, or your own abilities; forgetting that these are all only talents lent you from day to day by God?

11. Do you worship God with humility, and trust in Him alone, whether in joy or in deep affliction? If want presses you more and more, do you determine still to go about your duties diligently, without murmuring; casting all your care upon Him, who careth for you?

12. Are you as careful of your prayers, when on a visit or travelling, as when at home?

13. Have you neglected to receive the Holy Communion, or received it without due preparation? Have you taken God's name in vain, by swearing, or calling upon it in common conversation? Have you slighted His word, His ministers, or any thing belonging more especially to Him?

14. Have you spent the Lord's day to yourself, in doing business; or missed morning or afternoon service, to see friends, or from idleness? Have you taken pains that all your servants and children should come to Church?

15. Have you ever disobeyed your parents openly or secretly, or been sulky towards them, or in any way caused them grief by your faults? Have you loved them, and honoured them, and never felt disrespectful towards them; and helped them, if they have needed it, in sickness or poverty? Do you honour, obey, and pray for all whom God has set over you? Your Queen, and all Magistrates and rulers: your Bishop and Minister: your Master, Teacher, and Superiors? Have you ever spoken disrespectfully of them?

16. Have you ever fought a battle with any one, or struck them in anger, or hated them; or been violently angry with them? Is there any one for whom you would not pray? Do you envy others, if praised, or advanced before you in wealth, comforts, or learning?

17. Have you ever done any unclean action, or wished to do it? or spoken indecent words; or allowed yourself in unclean thoughts?

Have you ever been guilty of drunkenness or gluttony? Are you fond of dainties. Do you watch over your appetite: and remember that health and not indulgence is the reason for taking food? Do you seriously, and not as a matter of course, beg the blessing of God upon your meals, and thank Him after them!

18. Have you ever stolen any thing, or received money on false pretences, pretending, for instance, to be worse off than you are : or sold things under weight ; or asked a higher price than you knew they were worth : or bought things from the poor below the value, because you knew they must sell them : or given your servants or labourers too little wages ; or exacted an unreasonable quantity of work from them ?

Have you ever run in debt ? If you have done so from ill success, or from borrowing any thing, do you make a conscience of paying as soon as possible ? If you cannot do so easily, do you deny yourself, and lay by something regularly to pay it off ?

Have you made amends to those whom you have wronged ? Without this, you cannot hope God will forgive you.

19. Have you said false things about any person, or spread reports which you did not know to be true, about their character or religious opinions ? Have you listened to any such reports ? Have you jested at others, especially at those whom you meet as friends ?

If you have spread a false report, you must confess that it is false, and take the shame on yourself, or you cannot hope to be forgiven.

20. Do you *set your heart* upon money, and upon getting on, as it is called, in the world ? Are you ready to part with what you have, or with your plans and schemes, if God requires ? Do you give to the poor according to your means, and cheerfully ?

Ejaculations and Prayers.

It is supposed, of course, that you have your regular prayers ; therefore these are only to be added to them, not to stand in their place.

When you rise from bed, say devoutly—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Lord, I commit myself into Thy hands. Thou hast raised me up from sleep, take me into Thy protection this day.

Ejaculations to be used when assaulted by Temptation.

These may be used at any time in the day : either at your devotions, at mid-day or in the course of your work.

Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. O set me up upon the rock that is higher than I.

I will call upon the Lord, which is worthy to be praised ; so shall I be safe from mine enemies.

O hold Thou up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Show me Thy ways, O Lord, and teach me Thy paths. Lead me forth in Thy truth, and learn me, for Thou art the God of my salvation : in Thee hath been my hope all the day long. Call to remembrance Thy tender mercies, and Thy loving kindnesses, which have been ever of old. O remember not the sins and offences of my youth : but according to mercy think Thou upon me, O Lord, for Thy goodness, in Jesus Christ.

For Thy name's sake be merciful unto my sin, for it is great. Mine eyes are ever looking unto Thee ; O pluck my feet out of the net. Turn Thee unto me, and have mercy upon me : for I am desolate and in misery.

Consider my enemies how many they are : my adversaries are all in Thy sight. O keep my soul, and deliver me , let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in Thee. Lord, I put myself into Thy hands ; take from me what Thou wilt, but not Thy mercy.

O God the Father, my Father in Christ Jesus, look upon Thy servant in affliction, and be not angry with me.

O Lord Jesu, who hast shed Thy Blood for me, let me not offend Thee by sin. O Holy Ghost, who hast received me in Baptism, help me, that I may remain faithful.

Your evening prayers will, of course, have been said humbly on your knees, before you enter your bed.—On entering say,—

In the name of Jesus Christ, who died for me and was buried, I lie down to rest.

O Heavenly Father, watch over me in the helplessness of the night : let no evil come near to hurt my soul or my body : preserve me from evil dreams, and evil thoughts : and have mercy upon me now, and at the hour of death through Jesus Christ. Amen.

“The Shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

Fix your heart upon God as your Deliverer, and upon His promises, and say, standing,—

I believe in God the Father Almighty, &c.

After which, humbly kneeling,—

Lord have mercy upon me.

Christ have mercy upon me.

Lord have mercy upon me.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

When delivered from Temptation.

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise His Holy Name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. My heart hath trusted in Him, and I am helped ; therefore my heart danceth for joy, and in my song will I praise Him.

My soul hangeth upon Thee. Thy right hand hath upholden me.

Merciful Lord, who hast delivered me from danger, and set my feet upon the rock, and ordered my goings ; I humbly praise and thank Thee for this Thy great mercy. And pray Thee to help me that I may show forth my thankfulness not only with my lips but in my life ; by resisting every temptation, and striving henceforth to discover and root out every thing in me which offendeth Thee. I offer myself and all I have to Thee : and desire to serve Thee only. Grant that I may never presume upon my own strength, but take heed continually lest I fall. And do Thou be near at hand to save me from evil through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Gracious Father, who hast mercifully delivered me, grant that I may always trust in Thee, and that I may now be more careful to deny my own will, and to do good to all men, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thanksgiving for Deliverance.

Merciful Lord, Who hast delivered me from danger, and set my feet upon the rock and ordered my goings. I humbly praise and thank Thee for this mercy to Thy unworthy servant.—Let me shew forth my thankfulness, by striving henceforth to discover and cast out every thing in me which offendeth Thee. I offer myself up to Thee, and desire to serve Thee only. Give me grace to distrust myself, to be watchful, and to take heed continually lest I fall.

Prayer before Self Examination.

O Lord, Who knowest all my doings from my childhood until now; and seest the very secrets of my heart: help me to search out all my sins: and grant me so to repent of, and to root them out, that I may find mercy through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

Confession of sins after Self Examination.

O merciful Father, I humbly confess that I have all my life long gone astray from Thy ways, like a lost sheep. I was sinful by nature; and when Thou hadst cleansed me in Baptism, and promised me Thy help to overcome sin: I shrunk from Thy holy ways, and turned back after vanities, and defiled myself again. I loved those things and persons, which were most of this world, and made me forget Thee; and my perverse soul loathed those, which would have kept me by Thee.

Nay I have had many warnings, which Thou didst send by my parents, and superiors, by my friends, by the examples of others, by troubles, disgrace, and sicknesses, by Thy ministers, and Thy holy Word: in my youth, and in my riper years.

These warnings I have often slighted in my pride. I have not believed my sinfulness in Thy sight: nor searched my heart to discover it. I have looked at others and not at myself. I have not feared temptation, nor watched, as Thou hast commanded. I have not accepted rebuke meekly, and thus I have fallen again.

I now see and confess that I have sinned against Thee, by, &c. *Here confess particular sins.*

I have done these evils in Thy sight, and by turning from Thee, have turned from my Life, and there is no health in me. Behold I am wearied and burdened with my own ways; they have been my ruin: and Thou mayest justly refuse to hear my prayer.

Yet, O Father of mercy, cast me not quite away: do not refuse to help me, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Be merciful unto me a sinner, who earnestly desire to turn from my own ways, and to do Thy will only. Accept my imperfect repentance: do Thou deepen it; and let no worldly comforts ever make me forget my sin while I live here.

Let me not look for ease in this world, but be ready to give up every thing, which is dangerous to me. And to find my comfort in taking up my cross, and following Thee; that I may enter into Thy rest hereafter. Renew and purge me day by day: and grant me Thy grace, that I may henceforth live according to Thy will only.

And in the day of judgement have mercy on me, through the precious Blood and atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

Lord, I put myself into Thy hands: O deal with me according unto Thy name, for sweet is Thy mercy.

To this the 51st. Psalm may very fitly be added.

O Lord I will trust on Thee, deliver me from sin, and let me not be confounded, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

For grace to live holily.

O Gracious Father send Thy Holy Spirit into my heart, and help me to be firm in doing right, steady in resisting sin, watchful against all temptation, obedient to those set over me, loving towards my neighbours, diligent in my business, cheerful in taking up the cross, ready to part with every thing which Thou takest from me.

Let me love Thee and Thy blessings above all things: that so, being purified by Thee here, I may at the last day awake up after Thy likeness, and be satisfied with it, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

" O Almighty Lord, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern, both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments ; that through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*"

" Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire.
Thou the annointing spirit art,
Who dost thy seven-fold gifts impart.

Thy blessed Unction from above,
Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
Enable with perpetual light
The dulness of our blinded sight.

Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of thy grace.
Keep far our foes, give peace at home;
Where thou art guide, no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And thee, of both, to be but One.
That, through the ages all along,
This may be our endless song :

Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

" The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*"



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